

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 06310 171243Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 TRSE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: IR SHUM PGOV
SUBJ: ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION

REF: TEHRAN 5337

1. FOLLOWING ON THE HEELS OF THE MILITARY COURT REFORM
LEGISLATION, (REPORTED REFTEL), THE GOVERNMENT HAS
SUBMITTED A BILL TO THE LEGISLATURE WHICH WOULD
INTRODUCE PENAL MEASURES FOR DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS
OF RACE, CREED OR SEX. THE BILL HAS BEEN APPROVED BY
THE SENATE AND IN COMMITTEE BY THE MAJLES. IT WILL
BECOME LAW WHEN ADOPTED BY THE FULL MAJLES, MOST
LIKELY PRIOR TO THE SUMMER RECESS SCHEDULED TO START
THE FIRST WEEK OF AUGUST.

2. ACCORDING TO THE BILL, INDIVIDUALS FOUND GUILTY OF
RACIST PROPAGANDA WILL BE CONDEMNED UP TO SIX MONTHS
IN PRISON AND FINED FROM 10,000 TO 50,000 FIALS.
MORE SEVERE PENALTIES, UP TO ONE YEAR IMPRISONMENT
AND 100,000 RIAL FINE, ARE PROPOSED FOR THOSE WHO FORM
GROUPS OR PUBLICATIONS WITH THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING
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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 06310 171243Z

RACIAL HATRED AND DISCRIMINATION.

3. EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE JULY 13 ENGLISH-LANGUAGE
DAILY KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL ASSERTED THAT, "IRANIANS BY
NATURE, AND BECAUSE OF THEIR TRADITIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE,
ARE FREE FROM THE SOCIAL ATTITUDES WHICH BREED BIAS AND
PREJUDICE ON GROUNDS OF RACE AND RELIGION". THE NEW

REGULATIONS ARE ONLY NECESSARY, ACCORDING TO KAYHAN, BECAUSE IRANIAN SOCIETY "BEING AN OPEN AND FREE SOCIETY IS EXPOSED TO IDEAS AND WAVES OF PROPAGANDA FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD."

4. COMMENT: THIS LEGISLATION IS ONLY ONE ELEMENT IN A CONTINUING SERIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS MEASURES TAKEN RECENTLY BY THE GOI. ALSO PENDING FINAL MAJLES APPROVAL IS MILITARY COURT REFORM AND LEGISLATION ENTITLING MOTHERS TO WORK PARTTIME FOR THREE MONTHS FOLLOWING THE BIRTH OF A CHILD (WITH A PROPORTIONATE SALARY BUT WITH NO REDUCTION IN THEIR EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS.) ONE KNOWLEDGEABLE MAJLES DEPUTY HAS TOLD EMBOFF THAT THESE MEASURES HAVE WIDE SUPPORT AMONG THE LEGISLATURE AND "WERE A REAFFIRMATION OF THE PERSIAN TRADITION FROM THE TIME OF CYRUS THE GREAT". FACT THAT SHAH IS SEEN AS INSPIRATION BEHIND THESE MEASURES NO DOUBT CONTRIBUTED TO DEPUTY'S EXPRESSION OF ENTHUSIASM.
SULLIVAN

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